

New York City Council:
Small Business Committee and Cultural Affairs Committee
“New York City’s Cultural Sector and Derivative Small Business”
Friday, May 11, 2012, 10:00 AM – 250 Broadway, 16th Floor Committee Room
Testimony by Kate D. Levin, Commissioner, New York City Department of Cultural Affairs

Good morning. I am Kate Levin, Commissioner of the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs (DCA), and I am here today to testify with regard to New York City’s Cultural Sector and Derivative Small Business. I am joined by my colleagues Zahra Amanpour, Executive Director of the Small Business Services Business Solutions Program and Eric Johnson from the Economic Development Corporation’s Center for Economic Transformation. .

Culture is critical to New York City’s quality of life and identity as an international arts capital. It is also an economic driver, present in every neighborhood in all five boroughs. Through the Department of Cultural Affairs, the City supports over 900 nonprofit cultural organizations each year and I will highlight the role they play as businesses. I will also outline services DCA and other agencies provide to strengthen arts groups and maximize their impact on the communities they serve.

New York City’s Department of Small Business Services defines a “small business” as having fewer than 125 employees. Almost all of New York City’s 1200 nonprofit cultural organizations fall within this category. Statistics from the Cultural Data Project indicate that the median staff size of these 1200 institutions is 6 employees. For organizations with budgets of less than \$250,000 dollars, the median staff size is 3. It is worth noting that a closer look at this employment data foregrounds the unique hiring pattern at cultural institutions, in which “employment” can include full-time and part-time staff members, volunteers, independent contractors and vendors.

The majority of cultural organizations may be small businesses, but their significance as employers may not be accurately captured due to these staffing patterns. For example, the Department of Labor only measures employees who work for wages at a single place of business. By excluding teaching artists, independent contractors and vendors that may be employed at multiple cultural organizations, national measurements will overlook the full impact of arts employment.

To give some sense of this reach, in Fiscal 2010 members of the Cultural Institutions Group spent \$275 million on over 9,900 vendors including caterers, dry cleaners, plumbers, costume suppliers, and marketing and communications services across the five boroughs. The range of services purchased highlights the extent to which arts and culture is a crucial part of our entire economy.

One of the most profound, if hard to measure, impacts of cultural organizations is manifested in their transformational nature. Like Naturally Occurring Retirement Communities, or “NORCs”, we have made it a priority to support Naturally Occurring Cultural Districts (NOCDs) which we call “NOCDs” –pronounced “NAKEDs”. These organic concentrations of cultural organizations have a collective impact that not only stimulates and supports a range of other businesses, but also provides significant value in terms of local identity. Here are some examples of recent targeted investments:

- The Fourth Arts Block (FAB) is an alliance of arts organizations and businesses on East Fourth Street in the East Village. In 2005 the City transferred 6 buildings on the block to 8 cultural organizations, for \$1. Currently, we are investing more than \$19 million in capital improvements throughout the district. Since then, the cultural

district has grown to include over 17 arts organizations which attract an annual audience of 200,000 and serve over 1,200 artists.

- The Downtown Brooklyn Cultural District consists of more than 40 arts organizations that attract 500,000 visitors. The City has invested over \$200 million dollars in support of capital projects in the area, including the 80 Arts Building which houses the Museum of Contemporary African Diasporan Arts, Evidence Dance Company, and Story Corps, among others; the Irondale Center; a new home for BRIC Arts Media BKLN and UrbanGlass in the Strand Theater; and the Brooklyn Academy of Music's soon to open Fisher Theater.
- In Long Island City, we have invested nearly \$80 million for a wide range of capital enhancement projects at several cultural organizations including the Noguchi Museum, Sculpture Center, MoMA PS1 and the Chocolate Factory.
- In 2007, DCA participated in the rezoning of 125th Street including a bonus to incentivize commercial developers to partner with arts organizations. We continue to work with the Economic Development Corporation and the Upper Manhattan Empowerment Zone to develop Mart125, a mixed-use facility on 125th Street. The center will include a new 10,000-square-foot facility for the National Jazz Museum in Harlem and other arts groups, as well as ground floor retail space for local businesses.
- While trolleys have proven to have mixed benefits to cultural organizations, two such initiatives have been extremely successful. Led by the Bronx Council on the Arts, the Bronx Culture Trolley program encourages arts participation in the South Bronx every Wednesday, and the Heart of Brooklyn trolley makes stops at the Brooklyn Museum, Prospect Park, Grand Army Plaza and other landmarks in Prospect Heights.
- The Metropolitan Transit Authority and DCA have provided marketing and funding support for the Queens Art Express, an annual program of the Queens Council on the Arts that invites riders to take the 7 train and visit the 30 cultural organizations that have emerged along its route.

The Department of Cultural Affairs and its colleague agencies have created a number of programs to support the creative workforce. For example:

- The Department of Small Businesses Services (SBS) provides oversight for the City's 67 Business Improvement Districts (BIDs), which aim to improve neighborhoods. Cultural nonprofits have been terrific partners for these BIDs. For example, the Myrtle Avenue Brooklyn Partnership and Fulton Business Alliance have both worked with artists and arts organizations to revitalize Fort Greene. DCA and our colleagues at SBS recognize that BID membership fees can be costly for cultural nonprofits, and we are working together to promote arts organizations as vital partners for BID initiatives.
- At the same time we are always seeking ways to help artists and administrators improve their personal financial planning skills, in order to function as successful businesses of their own. In 2009, in the midst of the financial crisis, our agency started the *Art of Money* seminar series in collaboration with the Department of Consumer Affairs to link these workers with technical assistance organizations and financial training. Past sessions were

held in Harlem, Long Island City, and Bedford Stuyvesant. Altogether more than 300 participants received information on accessing and using credit, reducing existing debt, and planning for irregular income streams through this program, which we hope to continue in the next fiscal year.

- That same year, Mayor Bloomberg launched a series of initiatives to strengthen the City's nonprofits including a Bridge Loan Fund to assist organizations during the challenging credit market. As part of that program we recently launched a partnership with Essensa, a group purchasing organization that leverages the buying power of nonprofits as an incentive to vendors to offer below market rates. Participating nonprofits can take advantage of office supplies, health insurance providers, and food service vendors, among other resources. DCA and Essensa hosted five information sessions for arts organizations at venues around the City to highlight the potential impact on their bottom-line. To date, 164 organizations have signed up for Essensa accounts, including 61 cultural nonprofits.
- Marketing is essential to promote cultural programs and attract audiences, but it is very expensive. DCA and the City's tourism and marketing organization, NYC & Company, have partnered to feature thousands of events from hundreds of cultural organizations on our online cultural calendars. Events are also shared with NYC.gov and the City's 311 call centers. In addition to helping visitors and residents take full advantage of New York City's cultural offerings, our goal remains to offer a free marketing resource to cultural groups seeking to build audiences. We urge all of your cultural constituents to contribute to the Calendar at nyc.gov/nyculture.
- Through Materials for the Arts, DCA supports hundreds of cultural organizations with budgets under \$100,000, by providing free materials for their operations and programming needs. Thus far in Fiscal 2012, 1,739 member organizations have received supplies, and we have conducted more than 4,500 transactions – either in the warehouse or through MFTA's online direct-donation service. In 2011, MFTA distributed over \$4 million worth of goods to its constituents from a wide range of donors, including design and technology firms, and the film and television industries. This is just another example of how a wide array of businesses collaborate and support one another.

In conclusion, cultural organizations are part of a robust small business sector that has a widespread impact on their local communities and the City as a whole. I would like to thank Chairman Van Bramer and Chairman Reyna for highlighting this topic. I will need to depart at 10.30, but my colleagues are here to answer any questions you may have.

**Testimony of Eric Johnson
Vice President, NYCEDC**

**City Council Committee on Cultural Affairs, Libraries, & International Intergroup
Relations**

Hon. James Van Bramer, Chair

Jointly with

The Committee on Small Business

Hon. Diana Reyna, Chair

May 11, 2012

Oversight Hearing on New York City's Cultural Sector and Derivative Small Businesses

Good morning Chairpersons Van Bramer and Reyna, and members of both committees.

My name is Eric Johnson, and I am a vice president in the New York City Economic Development Corporation's Industry Transformation Team. I'm pleased to be here to provide information and answer your questions about the importance of New York City's creative economy, and on NYCEDC's efforts to provide creative sector businesses with access to affordable workspace, business skills training, affordable exhibit space, as well as access to capital for business expansion purposes.

The Importance of New York City's Creative Economy¹

A thriving cultural sector is critical to New York's economy, identity, and quality of life. State-wide, it is estimated that creative sector businesses generate more than 194,000 jobs, wages of \$9.8 billion, \$1.2 billion in tax revenues to the state, and have an overall economic impact of \$25.7 billion. New York City's creative sector generates over 160,300 jobs, over \$8.2 billion in wages, over \$904 million in tax revenues to New York City, and has an overall economic impact of over \$21.2 billion.

¹ *Arts as an Industry: Their Economic Impact on New York City and New York State*, p. 7 (2006).

In support of this very important sector of our economy, the NYCEDC administers 6 key initiatives. These initiatives are: the Artists' Studio Space, Artist as Entrepreneur, Curate NYC, Design Entrepreneurs NYC 2012, Fashion Production Fund, and the Made in NYC Media Center.

Artists Studio Space²

The Artists Studio Space initiative helps emerging artists access a variety of sizes of studio space at the Brooklyn Army Terminal in Sunset Park. Partnering with Chashama, an arts not-for-profit that connects artists with affordable workspaces, this EDC program provides approximately 50,000 square feet of space to be used as 90 artists' studios. The program began in 2008 with 20,000 square feet of space, and it has since expanded to its current size to accommodate more than twice as many artists.

Artist as Entrepreneur³

EDC, along with its stakeholder partners the New York Foundation for the Arts (NYFA) and the Lower Manhattan Cultural Council (LMCC), launched the Artists as Entrepreneur initiative in 2010 to help equip New York City's artists (visual, performing and literary) with necessary business and management skills to successfully market their work. The program's five-day long sessions include career planning and business plan writing; marketing and networking; using the internet; fundraising; audience development; financial principals. The program has trained over 255 artists since its launch.

² See EDC Website at: <http://www.nycedc.com/program/artists-studio-space>

³ See EDC Website at: <http://www.nycedc.com/program/artist-entrepreneur>

Curate NYC⁴

The Curate NYC initiative was launched in 2010 by EDC and Full Spectrum Experience, an arts non-profit, in the fall of 2010. The Curate NYC program is a juried exhibition that showcases the work of New York City emerging artists and enhances NYC's brand as a global arts capital. The initiative's components include a Web-based competition judged by a panel of curators, and exhibitions of postcard reproductions of selected artwork, as well as original works, across the City. Nearly 1,200 artists participated in the inaugural year, and over 1,500 artists participated in the second year of the program.⁵

Design Entrepreneurs NYC 2012⁶

Design Entrepreneurs NYC 2012 is a new initiative created to help support emerging talent in order to grow the City as a hub of fashion design. Set to kick-off in June 2012, the initiative is a collaboration between EDC and the Fashion Institute of Technology (FIT) which will offer a free intensive "mini-MBA" program to provide select fashion designers with the necessary skills to successfully run a fashion label, including marketing, operations, and financial management.

Fashion Production Fund⁷

The Fashion Production Fund is another new EDC initiative created to assist emerging designers obtain financing and allow them to expand their operations during the critical early growth stages to ensure the overall success and expansion of the fashion industry in New York City. The initiative is currently in the RFP process seeking proposals (due May 4, 2012) from

⁴ See EDC Website at: <http://www.nycedc.com/program/curate-nyc>

⁵ See Curate NYC Website at: <http://www.curatenyc.org/>

⁶ See EDC Website at: <http://www.nycedc.com/program/design-entrepreneurs-nyc>

⁷ See EDC Website at: <http://www.nycedc.com/opportunity/nyc-fashion-production-fund-consultant-services-rfp>

financial institutions to develop and launch a \$5 million fund to provide loans to emerging fashion design businesses based in New York City.

“Made in NY” Media Center⁸

In partnership with the Mayor’s Office of Media and Entertainment, EDC will issue a RFP for an operator and physical space to establish the “Made in NY” Media Center which will provide media entrepreneurs with affordable workspace and serve as a central location where traditional media companies and new media entrepreneurs can meet, interact and collaborate. The center will host workshops and training sessions to encourage cross-sector learning and creative cooperation and will support new businesses in the field of emerging media, including interactive entertainment, digital advertising and mobile apps, by providing high-quality, ready-to-use office space to accommodate a number of companies and their employees.

(Closing Statement)

Together, these 6 initiatives provide crucial access to affordable workspace, business skills training, affordable exhibit space, and access to capital for business expansion purposes.

Thank you very much for this opportunity to testify and I’d be happy to answer any questions you may have.

⁸ See SBS Website at: http://www.nyc.gov/html/sbs/html/pr/2012_03_26_steiner.shtml

TESTIMONY BY
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR ZAHRA AMANPOUR
NEW YORK CITY
DEPARTMENT OF SMALL BUSINESS SERVICES
BEFORE
THE COMMITTEES ON CULTURAL AFFAIRS
AND SMALL BUSINESSES
OF THE
NEW YORK CITY COUNCIL
MAY 11, 2012

Good morning members of the Council. My name is Zahra Amanpour, I am the Executive Director of NYC Business Solutions at the Department of Small Business Services.

The Department of Small Business Services remains committed to the cultural sector, both by serving businesses in the sector and by serving businesses that benefit from catering to the sector, i.e. restaurants and retail vendors.

NYC Business Solutions, offered by the Department of Small Businesses throughout the five boroughs, provides a set of services focused on businesses successfully starting, operating and expanding in New York City. Services include launch assistance, financing, legal, courses, recruitment, selling to government and incentives. Since 2010, NYC Business Solutions has provided 1,099 services to 561 unique Arts and Entertainment businesses throughout the city. Arts and Entertainment is consistently one of the top ten sectors served by the NYC Business Solutions Centers.

Additionally, the NYC Business Solutions Centers and FastTrac New Venture and Growth Venture business planning courses provide critical knowledge, skills and guidance to entrepreneurs interested in starting businesses targeting the employees and customers of cultural centers. The information provided is focused on understanding the market and building a business that can adjust to the specific needs of the market. There is no doubt that the businesses served add to the vitality, richness and strength of communities throughout New York City.

For the past three years, SBS has partnered with The Actor's Fund, a nationwide human services organization that helps professionals in performing arts and entertainment, to offer the Business Planning Basics course to a 20 to 30 actors annually wanting to establish themselves as a brand and business in the Arts and Entertainment sector.

In addition, our Neighborhood Development Division oversees the City's 67 Business Improvement Districts, many of which partner with and leverage cultural and other anchor institutions. For example, with financial support from SBS and Councilmember Leticia James, the FAB Alliance BID in Fort Greene/Clinton Hill is energizing the public spaces in the district with cultural events. Produced in partnership with BAM, FAB Alliance is offering free arts and crafts for children, concerts and cultural

dance performances on the Fulton Street plazas this summer. Not only do these events capitalize on the area's rich heritage in the arts and culture, but they also change negative perceptions of Fulton Street and drive foot traffic to local businesses.

The Lincoln Square BID in Manhattan is another great example of a naturally occurring cultural district, with Lincoln Center serving as an anchor and complementary businesses and institutions creating a cultural cluster. The Lincoln Square BID has developed programs to further synergies with the retail and restaurant businesses in the district. For example, the BID created the Lincoln Square Fashion Plate Prix Fixe during Mercedes Benz Fashion Week. Twenty-one restaurants participated in a special pre-fix menu, which drew the public to restaurants surrounding Fashion Week at Lincoln Center.

As our work clearly indicates, SBS remains committed to the cultural sector and continued strength of the New York City businesses.

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New York City Council
Oversight Hearing on New York City's Cultural Sector and Derivative Businesses
Jointly with Small Business and Cultural Affairs
May 11, 2012

Testimony from Cassandra Smith, Senior Project Manager
Greenpoint Manufacturing and Design Center

My name is Cassandra Smith, and I am the Senior Project Manager for the Greenpoint Manufacturing and Design Center, the City's premier nonprofit industrial real estate developer. We are also a member of the Naturally Occurring Cultural District Working Group. I'd like to speak today about the policies that support creative industries in New York City and encourage that they be continued and expanded. I'd like to start by highlighting the role that Naturally Occurring Cultural Districts can and do play in the city's small business economy.

GMDC works at the intersection of arts and industry. We have developed over 600,000 SF of industrial space in New York City and currently own and manage 4 buildings in North Brooklyn. Those buildings house over 100 small manufacturing and artisanal businesses which together employ more than 500 workers. From our tenant survey, we know that:

- These businesses represent the diversity of New York City's manufacturing sector: custom woodworkers and cabinet makers, metalworkers, jewelry makers, fine artists, display makers, specialty electronics manufacturers, milliners, glass and ceramic artists, and more.
- Ninety-one percent of the business owners and employees live in New York City, many within the zip codes adjacent to the building where they work.
- The jobs in our buildings provide a high quality option for a key segment of the population:
 - Forty-six percent of the employees speak English as a second language.
 - Employees in GMDC's buildings make an average of \$42,000 annually compared to \$27,000 and \$25,000 for retail and food service, respectively.
- A total of \$65m in revenue is generated in our buildings annually, with an additional \$35m being induced or indirectly generated.

Statistics tell the story that arts and industry are important to the city for their economic value as well as cultural value. Our multi-tenanted buildings are located in light manufacturing districts where businesses connect, share resources and services, and contribute to the local and citywide economy. We'd like to emphasize how important it is to stabilize current industrial areas by maintaining, strengthening, and enforcing manufacturing zoning. Stable areas allow creative businesses to expand, grow, hire, and spend in New York City's Naturally Occurring Cultural Districts.

GMDC works to provide long term space for creative businesses in development projects that are funded with a mix of City Council capital dollars, federal tax credit programs, and private debt. The support of the City through capital funding programs, tax exemptions, and support on tax credit proposals is essential to development for creative small businesses. GMDC would like to thank the Council for their support for our projects and encourage the continuation of these programs and policies so that New York City's creative industries can continue to flourish in affordable manufacturing space.

Finally, an additional policy that could establish or stabilize flexible workspaces in these cultural districts would be low-cost financing programs. Affordable debt programs to mission driven landlords, including nonprofits and creative industry leadership, would be an important tool in creating space where work can happen and help creative businesses continue to be a central part of New York City's identity.

Thank you for your time today.

NO LONGER

EMPTY

No Longer Empty's Testimonial
May 11, 2012

INTRODUCTION

Empty space is a blight on the community. One can leave it fallow, or activate the space for the community benefit until the space can be returned into long-term commercial use.

I'm Naomi Hersson-Ringskog, the executive director of No Longer Empty (NLE). I will introduce this public art organization's work and share how it supports small businesses and Naturally Occurring Cultural Districts.

Throughout New York City, No Longer Empty temporarily repurposes empty storefronts or buildings into professionally-curated, site-specific exhibitions that are free to the public. With each exhibition, lasting 1 to 3 months, we collaborate with local organizations to co-produce accompanying cultural and educational programming.

In just three years, No Longer Empty has orchestrated 13 exhibitions in different neighborhoods, exhibited 166 artists, hosted 158 program/events, and commissioned 104 new art works. In total, we have had close to a million visitors with 1,500 children participating in our educational programs. Of the 13 exhibitions, 5 of the spaces have been leased or had immediate paid collaborations.

BENEFITS

With art at the center, we at No Longer Empty act as catalysts for community building, economic revitalization and cultural tourism. All important aspects to the success of small businesses and naturally cultural occurring districts. Here are the following ways we contribute:

1. With a site-specific exhibition, we thematically preserve and enliven a neighborhood's history, stories, and narratives and add to its creative placemaking.
2. Staging the exhibitions offers career advances for artists, including larger platform and sales. (No Longer Empty typically presents 8 to 32 artists that are a mix of emerging and established as well as local and international artists.)
3. We provide arts and cultural programming in communities where cuts in budgets have diminished such programs in schools or for the general public. (For current exhibit in the Bronx, we have an average of 2 school tours a week, averaging 50 children for each tour)
4. We forge local community partnerships with cultural organizations, community-based organizations, and community boards around the exhibition to stimulate cross-promotion. (For the current exhibit, we have 17 collaborations with Bronx based organizations showcasing the cultural landscape to a wider audience).
5. We spend our money locally in the community, buying materials, supplies, and where possible hiring local workers.
6. With our custom neighborhood maps, we encourage our audience to linger in the neighborhood and visit or patron these sites. Where possible we have arranged incentives like discounts or 2 for 1 passes to the nearby restaurants or museums.

NO LONGER

EMPTY

In a previous City Council testimony, I discussed *Art in Empty Spaces* program that was a collaboration in Spring 2011 with local landlords, art organizations, and Manhattan's Community Board 3 that demonstrated the scalability and replicability of No Longer Empty's model.

All of these exhibits bring foot traffic into the community where the building was previously empty which benefits both small businesses and cultural districts. With the help of City Council, organizations like No Longer Empty can continue to

1. Create dynamic and safer street space for residents and businesses
2. Bolster the vibrancy and sustainability of Naturally Occurring Cultural Districts
3. Attract new visitors and investors to the local businesses and the general area

Recommendations for the City to do are

1. Publically endorse the viability of interim use of retail space
2. Conduct a thorough case-study on the benefits of temporary-interim uses
3. Establish major partners from art, businesses to real estate
4. Assist in the creative marketing/publicity of such initiatives
5. Amend funding practices to accommodate more projects that are done in a shorter timeframe than a year
6. A carrot-stick approach towards absentee landlords or vacant properties



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May 11, 2012

Testimony submitted by Monica Blum, President of the Lincoln Square Business Improvement District, to the New York City Council Committee on Small Business, and the Committee on Cultural Affairs, Libraries and International Intergroup Relations regarding New York City's Cultural Sector and Derivative Small Businesses

Chairpersons Reyna and Van Bramer and members of the Committees: Thank you for the opportunity to testify today on this important subject. My name is Monica Blum and I am the President of the Lincoln Square Business Improvement District, an organization that was created in 1996 by neighborhood property owners and stakeholders to make a great neighborhood better. Lincoln Center was a founding member of our BID, along with anchor institutions Fordham University, ABC, which has been in the neighborhood since the late 1940s, and all the major property owners and many business leaders.

When the BID was first formed, Lincoln Center, which was built in the early 1960s as part of an urban renewal project, had already generated considerable development activity in the area. Several real estate developers had the vision and foresight to build major mixed-use properties that included large residential complexes with retail and dining opportunities. Back in 1996 we described ourselves as the cultural and entertainment heart of the City. Our district was unique in that we could proudly say "it's all here" and it was true. We had lots of culture, a large residential population (many who moved here to be near Lincoln Center), diverse and interesting restaurants, shops, and 20 plus movie screens and a major media company, ABC.

There is no doubt that Lincoln Center was largely responsible for the development of Lincoln Square and is the economic engine that has shaped this neighborhood. In our files I found an article from *The New York Times* dated January 22, 1984 about Lincoln Square which stated "Living in this area is like living on a stage all the time"; a subsequent article in *The New York Times*, dated July 26, 1998 described our district as a "hub of culture and entertainment". Lincoln Square has a long cultural history that predates Lincoln Center and extends beyond the Lincoln Center campus. The neighborhood is also home to the Kaufman Cultural Center (originally called The Hebrew Arts School and founded in 1952), the Professional Children's School (in Lincoln Square since the 1930s), and Fiorello H. LaGuardia High School of Music, Art and Performing Arts (also known as The "Fame" School). In 1964, the Huntington Hartford Museum, now the Museum of Arts and Design, was at Columbus Circle, and, in 1989, the Lincoln Square Branch of the American Folk Art Museum opened (now the Museum's permanent home.)

Over the past 16 years, we have seen tremendous growth and the number of cultural organizations, both in and just outside our district, continues to grow. The completion of Time Warner Center in 2004, which includes Jazz at Lincoln Center and a restaurant and bar collection that features some of the finest dining options in New York City, and Lincoln Center's recent \$1.2 billion redevelopment have contributed to this continued growth. Today, more than 23 million people visit Lincoln Square annually for entertainment and culture, for dining, and for shopping. Lincoln Center draws 5 million visitors every year, and many of them eat in our restaurants and shop in our stores.

Restaurants and retailers want to be in this exciting, vibrant neighborhood filled with artists and aspiring performers. Long-established businesses, large and small, have been joined by new ones. Daniel Boulud has opened three establishments in Lincoln Square in the last two years. Every restaurant is packed before, after and even during performances, and on weekends. Our more casual, smaller eateries and quick serves are busy as well. Our four hotels also draw visitors who come for the many cultural offerings and special events that take place in our theatres, concert halls, and other cultural and educational venues.

Today we have three outstanding museums, the Museum of Biblical Art (MOBIA), the Museum of Art and Design, and the American Folk Art Museum. The new David Rubenstein Atrium, a privately owned public space redesigned and now operated by Lincoln Center features free weekly performances and is a Visitor Center and gathering place, with a great food service. We have 23 movie screens, including the AMC Loews Lincoln Square, Lincoln Plaza Cinemas, which show the latest foreign films, the Walter Reade Theater, which is home to many festivals, and the

newly completed Elinor Bunin Munroe Film Center on 65th Street, aptly named “Street of the Arts.” The Caribbean Cultural Center, Alvin Ailey Dance Theatre, Heschel High School, and Lincoln Square Neighborhood Center are just a few blocks away. The Big Apple Circus has its winter season at Lincoln Center. The Juilliard School offers 100 free concerts annually. The Met Opera projects 10 evenings of free performances on HD screens during the summer. Smaller orchestral groups such as the Jupiter Symphony perform in Lincoln Square and many of our churches and synagogues offer musical performances, such as the acclaimed Bach Vespers at the Holy Trinity Lutheran Church. All of our smaller cultural organizations and performing groups realize that being identified with Lincoln Square helps build audiences.

We have approximately 300 businesses and non-profit organizations, and approximately 22,000 theatre seats in 21 different venues, including of course Lincoln Center, Jazz at Lincoln Center, Fordham University, the West Side Y, John Jay College, New York Institute of Technology, and many others with active theaters and first rate performances. Many of the 22,000 seats are available for rental (listed on our website) thereby generating additional income to the organizations to help support their programming.

In 2000, our organization, recognizing the incredible draw that culture and our district has, created Winter’s Eve at Lincoln Square, which has become New York’s largest holiday festival and is an annual event featuring free entertainment, food sampling at nominal cost, and family fun throughout the district, including performances along the sidewalks, in stores, in cultural venues, in parks, and even in banks. Our goal was to promote our area businesses and our cultural resources. We have featured some of the world’s best performers at Winter’s Eve, and engage as many of our cultural organizations and businesses as possible. In addition to featuring world class performers, such as Arlo Guthrie, Catherine Russell, Odetta, Peter Yarrow, Cyrus Chestnut, Dan Zanes, John Pizzarelli, the Klezmatics and many more, we also feature and showcase acclaimed student performers from the Professional Children’s School and high school choruses including the LaGuardia High School Show Choir, an annual favorite, and troupes from Dance Parade performing outdoors. Last year close to 100 businesses participated and some 25,000 people attended Winter’s Eve from all five boroughs and beyond. We believe Winter’s Eve is an event that can be replicated in any neighborhood by engaging even the smallest cultural organization.

The most recent example of derivative business is Fashion Week, which now makes Lincoln Center its home twice a year, and brings over 300,000 people from the fashion world to our neighborhood annually. Last year a study undertaken by Fordham University’s Graduate School of Business, with our assistance, measured the impact of staff, crews, and those working on the event. The study estimated that Fashion Week generates a \$40 million annual economic impact in Lincoln Square on hotels, retail, restaurants, and venue rental. The joining of culture and fashion has resulted in considerable derivative business especially for our restaurants and smaller food establishments.

In an effort to drive business to our restaurants during Fashion Week, we created our own restaurant week, “Fashion Plate Prix Fixe”, which is widely promoted by our publicist and received great coverage. Twenty five of our restaurants participated in “Fashion Plate Prix Fixe” and offered clever, affordable price fixed lunches and dinners open to the public. We also created a special promotion for the Fashion Week crews who are here for 10 weeks or so a year – 23 of our quick serve eateries offered the crews discounts – our “Fashion Week Crew Cuts.” Both of these promotions enable our businesses to feel the “halo” effect of Fashion Week and generated derivative business. We will offer these highly successful promotions again this fall.

Finally, as more visitors and culture seekers come to Lincoln Square, we have expanded our visitor services program. We hire local high school students and retirees to staff our three Neighborhood Information Carousels, and produce many publications that we make available to visitors and the patrons of our cultural organizations including our highly successful *Where to Eat in Lincoln Square*, *Where to Shop in Lincoln Square*, the official *Lincoln Square Map and Guide* and others. All of these, as well as our website which includes an events’ calendar, promote our businesses and our cultural organizations. Our marketing and promotional efforts have grown as our cultural, entertainment, and retail district thrives; we now spend approximately 30% of our budget on promoting and branding Lincoln Square which in turn generates derivative business for graphic designers, printers, and other small entrepreneurs.

It’s still all here in Lincoln Square!



May 10, 2012

Hearing on New York City's Cultural Sector and Derivative Businesses Jointly with Small Business and Cultural Affairs.

Comments prepared by
THE POINT COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

THE POINT COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION is a nonprofit organization dedicated to youth development and the cultural and economic revitalization of the Hunts Point section of the South Bronx. We believe the area's residents, their talents and aspirations, are The Point's greatest assets. Our mission is to encourage the arts, local enterprise, responsible ecology, and self-investment in the Hunts Point community. As a member of The Naturally Occurring Cultural District Working Group (NOCD-NY), a citywide alliance of community based arts networks and leaders that has joined together to revitalize NYC from the neighborhood up, we represent an anchor neighborhood based, community led cultural incubator, youth development service provider and mission driven property owner. We feel strongly that NOCD's if invested in, can be vital tool to leverage a community's assets and offer innovative solutions to some of our toughest social and economic challenges while truly helping to improve the quality of life of the current residents.

Our community of Hunts Point has had many long term struggles and still remains within one of the poorest congressional districts in the nation. Not only does our community have one of the highest unemployment rates in the state, but we have some of the lowest high school graduation rates in the city and suffer from a wide range of health disparities with one of the highest asthma rates in the nation. Despite these overwhelming challenges, our community has found a way to thrive and grow, in large part due to the power that arts and culture yield in revitalizing neighborhoods like ours.

When THE POINT first opened its doors in 1994, we understood the central place that arts and culture had within our community. Home to iconic venues such as the Hunts Point Palace, the memories of a vibrant local cultural economy that encouraged local entrepreneurship and investment fueled the desire to revisit the arts as a vital ingredient in revitalizing Hunts Point. You could say that back in the 1950's Hunts Point and Southern Boulevard was in fact a Naturally Occurring Cultural District. THE POINT has worked to build off of Hunts Point's strong history. Since our founding, we have provided affordable space for numerous small creative sector enterprises, consistently employed local residents, generated local, city and international tourism, trained hundreds of young people in creative economy related jobs and improved the overall aesthetics of Hunts Point through public arts projects that speak to the cultures represented by community residents. We have seen nothing but positive returns on this investment, as now we have seen the development of two new performance arts space in community board #2, including one that was incubated at The Point, as well as a new Arts-

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Sarah C. Lee / Karen Vanterpool / Leighton Wynter / Jose J. Virella

centered Charter School.

In our role as a community development agency, we strive to represent the voices of our communities and communicate needs and solutions that will improve the overall quality of life of our neighbors. We are here today to once again make the case for equity and justice as it pertains to historically marginalized communities and the critical role arts and culture plays in our work to address many of the social inequities I outlined earlier. We urge the Council to use **Public Resources to Equitably Support Neighborhood Based Culture through the following policy suggestions:**

- Champion and promote neighborhood cultural vitality citywide using existing promotional tools, ranging from free street banner program to improved NYC & Co relations (i.e. reduction of fees for small culturals, borough specific campaigns, web promotion, visitor centers).
- Work with MTA to include more local cultural resources and creative districts on the neighborhood maps in the subway stations and promotional campaigns (i.e. MoMA station).
- Launch a "Made in NYC" marketing campaign to promote the City's creative manufacturing sector, including all aspects of development and production (designer and fabricator) and art & culture that originates in NYC and moves across the globe (theater, music, publishing, art).
- Increase cultural funding to 1% of the city budget.
- Facilitate cross agency funding partnerships, like between SBS & DCA.
- Protect Summer Youth Employment funding.

We are evidence that Naturally Occurring Cultural Districts (NOCDs) stimulate a combination of social, civic, and economic benefits within communities and across them. As anchors for neighborhood-based economies, they support community self-determination & expression, equity, and local livelihoods. We look forward to continuing to be a part of this vital work moving forward.

Thank you for your time and careful consideration.

Respectfully,
Kellie Terry- Sepulveda
Executive Director



Upper Manhattan Empowerment Zone Development Corporation

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Remarks for a Joint Meeting of the Committee on Small Business and the
Committee on Cultural Affairs, Libraries and International Intergroup Relations
"New York City's Cultural Sector and Derivative Small Businesses"

by Verdery Roosevelt, SVP, Programs & Nonprofit Investments
Upper Manhattan Empowerment Zone Development Corporation

Friday, May 11, 2012 at 10:00 a.m.
250 Broadway, 16th Floor Committee Room

Good morning and thank you for this opportunity to testify today. My name is Verdery Roosevelt and I direct the cultural division of the Upper Manhattan Empowerment Zone, known as UMEZ.

As most of you know, UMEZ was created in the mid 1990's with the goal of revitalizing the economy of Upper Manhattan through job creation, corporate alliances, strategic investments and small business assistance.

In 2004, the UMEZ Board of Directors adopted a strategic plan that placed arts and culture at the center of UMEZ' nonprofit investment strategy. By strengthening the cultural industry in Upper Manhattan, we have been working to re-position the area as one of New York's primary cultural destinations and thereby generate a dynamic environment for the many small businesses in the Zone. I'd like to give you a few examples of the successful interaction we've nurtured between our small businesses and our cultural organizations.

The prime example is 125th Street. You're all familiar with the Apollo Theater and Studio Museum. Within blocks, you will also find the Romare Bearden Foundation, the Dwyer Cultural Center, Jazzmobile, and the Mama Foundation. Just down the street is the historic Victoria Theater, which will include a new arts complex in its development, and the 125th Street Firehouse, soon to be the new home of the Caribbean Cultural Center. Finally, the National Jazz Museum in Harlem will make its new home on the Mart 125 site just across from the Apollo.

On the same blocks, you will find Harlem's popular new restaurant, the Red Rooster, and the charming Chez Lucienne right next door. While economists would cite statistics on the connection between the success of these restaurants and local cultural activity, I can tell you

from personal experience that on the night Ballet Hispanico made its first appearance at the Apollo, both restaurants were packed with Ballet Hispanico fans before and after the show.

The foot traffic from this cultural group on 125th Street is bringing vibrancy to an area that supports many small businesses. By the way, this natural cultural district on 125th Street is now an official one. UMEZ worked closely with the City's Department of Planning to ensure that the value of this arts cluster was recognized in the rezoning plans; as a result, the rezoning includes an Arts and Entertainment Sub-district.

Another example: in East Harlem last spring, a group of 11 arts organizations partnered with 34 small businesses throughout the neighborhood to create a self-directed tour guide to all the participants, together with a book of discount coupons to lure shoppers to those businesses. the annual Puerto Rican Day Parade in June launched this terrific initiative.

In Washington Heights, Vantage Properties allowed local artists to run a pop-up bookstore in an empty storefront on Broadway for a month, as part of the Uptown Art Stroll last June. It drew so much traffic that the local arts service organization signed a lease with Vantage that would allow this volunteer bookstore to continue.

The East Harlem Business Capital Corporation sponsors banners that feature prominent cultural figures from the neighborhood, as a way of defining a distinctive profile for the neighborhood. The 125th Street BID does the same, with local businesses sponsoring the winning designs created by local artists. The Frederick Douglass Boulevard BID is using musical groups as a lure to encourage City-wide participation in their joint marketing initiative this weekend.

It is heartening to see this meeting today between the Small Business and Cultural Affairs Committees. Small businesses and cultural groups are natural allies in generating public awareness, neighborhood improvements and economic activity, and that benefits everyone.

We at UMEZ support your dialogue and are happy to provide more information or even a site visit to the natural cultural districts that make Upper Manhattan such a strong environment for small businesses. Thank you.



**Summary of Testimony at City Council Hearing--NOCD
Maria Bauman, Director of Education and Community Engagement,
Urban Bush Women**

5/11/12

All art is culturally specific, from ballet (Italian Renaissance courts) to opera (17th century Europe), to stepping exhibitions (South African miners and then African American fraternities) and abstract expressionist painting (American post-World War II movement). Placing cultures, racial, and ethnic groups on a hierarchy is not the intention nor role of any policy-maker or practitioner. The Naturally Occurring Cultural Districts Working Group of New York names equity as a value. We posit that New York residents who are diverse regarding geography, ethnicity, and their approach to citizenship must have equitable access to outlets of recognition and branding, funding, and space allocation in order to thrive and drive the economic and cultural vitality of our neighborhoods--two aspects of our larger New York City culture that we are known for around the world.

We encourage

- an expanded definition of economic activity, including the "small business" role that arts groups play to sustain the local economy (Urban Bush Women recently hosted a team of forty people from the Oprah Winfrey Leadership Academy in South Africa, and is soon to host a similar group of dancers from Fort Bend, Texas. Our dual identity as an internationally recognized performance group and a Brooklyn-based art for social change advocate positions us to drive tourism to our neighboring cultural organizations such as the Museum of Contemporary African Diasporan Art and Tribal Truths artisan shop and to local restaurants and gems like Cake Man Raven. We are a group of artists, and also a business contributing to our local economy)
- Encourage agencies, such as the Department of Cultural Affairs, Public Health, Transportation, Small Business Services, and City Planning, to come together to think about areas of the City holistically, including the arts. (Again, using Urban Bush Women on South Oxford Street in Fort Greene as an example: in June we will participate in culturally relevant place-making in our neighborhood with the Juneteenth Celebration by and for community-members, support individual artist-citizens making participatory work in public spaces across all five boroughs through our partnership with the Laundromat Project, share our experiences and approach

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**TESTIMONY for City Council hearing on “New York City’s Cultural Sector and Derivative Businesses”
Held jointly by Committees on Small Business and Cultural Affairs
May 11, 2012**

Good morning. Thank you to the Council for holding this hearing – to Councilmembers Van Bramer and Reyna for bringing together Culture and Small Business, committees who in my humble opinion are natural allies, even members of the same family – and a special appreciation to Councilmember Rosie Mendez who has been stellar in her encouragement and support of grassroots cultural groups in our neighborhood.

My name is Ryan Gilliam. I’m a theater director and playwright. For the past 16 years, I’ve also been a community-based artist, working with youth ages 12 to 19 in the East Village and Lower East Side. My organization, Downtown Art, is a small nonprofit based on East 4th Street. I am one of the artists who founded FAB-NYC, a local service organization working with cultural groups in our neighborhood.

Before we created FAB-NYC, we were lucky enough to have a diverse cultural community on East 4th Street. Thirteen small and medium-sized arts groups had homesteaded several city-owned buildings on our block. As we watched the neighborhood change dramatically, we all expected to lose those homes. Our coalition – FAB-NYC- was formed in an attempt to preserve a diverse cultural presence in our neighborhood. That was ten years ago and our story, unlike many others, has had a happy outcome. Our small nonprofits now own permanent homes and the properties we secured from the city are designated for nonprofit cultural use in perpetuity.

FAB-NYC was formed in response to the threat of displacement. However, it has gone on to do much, much more than preserve space. It has become a potent force in building community, building bridges between cultural groups and local forprofit businesses, between residents and workers, between our community and communities across the city.

As a neighborhood based artist and someone who loves my community, I want to strongly recommend that the Council recognize, support, and fund the work that FAB-NYC and others with similar missions are doing to strengthen, preserve, and enhance the vitality – economic and otherwise – of the city’s ‘naturally occurring cultural districts.’

Two weeks ago, 25 teenagers and I opened ‘The Bowery Wars’, an original music-theater work which is performed outdoors in the streets, parks, and vacant lots of the Lower East Side. FAB-NYC has supported this project in so many ways – they reached out to the leaders of a new local park, making the connection so we could perform there, they blogged, posted photos and interviews about our project on their website, they quadrupled our outreach with eblasts, facebook posts, and ‘tweets’, and they contacted local media on our behalf (we are featured in the first print edition of The Lo-Down, a Lower Eastside magazine, because of FAB.) They brainstormed with me about how to overcome all kinds of difficulties – both large and small – and – I’m not sure if you can fully appreciate this, but believe me, I do – they have purchased full-price tickets to come see the show on their days off.

FAB's support doesn't end with these practical efforts. As part of FAB, we've gotten to know other local cultural groups in new and closer ways. This past fall, when we desperately needed rehearsal space, three other FAB groups came to our rescue, adjusting their programs and offering us free or very low cost space. When a studio opened up in one of the 4th Street cultural buildings a few months ago, we were offered space at a modest rent with the intention that we could be housed there until our permanent home is renovated. At the studio's opening last month, colleagues in FAB were there to celebrate with us – and I was pulled aside by the artistic director of Teatro Circulo. He told me that he had not come empty handed. Because his group had been able to secure new lighting equipment, they wanted to donate \$30,000 worth of used lighting equipment to our future home. We simply didn't have these kinds of mutually supportive relationships before FAB existed.

FAB-NYC, under the leadership of Tamara Greenfield, has built community. At the FAB Cafe, everyone crosses paths – residents, workers, visitors. Tenants in local buildings received white roofs and new more efficient refrigerators through FAB's sustainability program. In our current production, we are using two set pieces that came from another FAB theater and were recycled through FAB's Load-Out event. The off hours in our rehearsal studio are being used by young choreographers through FAB's Dance Block program. And yesterday I heard two FAB staff members talking about getting their hair cut at one of the small businesses nearby and I thought, "I need a haircut. I think I'll go there."

I'm an artist and emphatically not an economist. I can't provide numbers and verified measurements for FAB's impact. I'm not sure anyone can. But when I try to imagine FAB's absence – and imagination is my strong suit – I am powerfully aware of the profound ways FAB-NYC has changed things for the better in our neighborhood.

You would probably agree with me that our local economies need creative efforts to help sustain them. The dividing line that separates small businesses and small culturals is mostly artificial. I urge the City Council to open a place at the table for entities like FAB/NYC from across the city –to work with them in strengthening local cultural assets and their integration with small businesses in ways that can build both economic power and community.

Submitted by

Ryan Gilliam, Artistic Director, Downtown Art
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City Council Testimony to the **Joint Hearing** of the
Committee on Small Business, and the
Committee on Cultural Affairs, Libraries and International Intergroup Relations
Regarding *"New York City's Cultural Sector and Derivative Small Businesses."*

May 11, 2012

I'd like to thank the members of the council for the opportunity to offer testimony today to this joint hearing of the Committee on Small Business and the Committee on Cultural Affairs, Libraries and International Intergroup Relations regarding "New York City's Cultural Sector and Derivative Small Businesses." I'm particularly pleased to thank the two committee Chairs, Council members Jimmy Van Bramer and Diana Reyna, for their longstanding dedication to these issues and to convening this forum today.

My name is Michael Hickey. Many of you know me from my former role as executive director of the Center for NYC Neighborhoods and my work coordinating citywide foreclosure prevention efforts to improve neighborhood stabilization. I've testified before the Council many times, and you will recall that I'm a fan of numbers, charts and graphs.

I'm testifying today in my role as an independent researcher currently conducting analysis on NYC cultural organizations and their economic profiles. I'm pleased to have access to data provided through the Cultural Data Project, a national initiative which in New York State gathers a wide array of financial information from nonprofit cultural organizations applying to access public funds.

Based on the data collected through CDP, we know a lot about the 723 nonprofit cultural organizations that reported financial data in 2010. We know they had \$2.4 billion in revenues. We know that more than half that was earned income from a combination of ticket sales (\$437 million), classes and workshops (\$77 million), touring (\$45 million), concessions (\$34 million), space rentals (\$83 million) and many other types of entrepreneurial activity. We know that just 12% of that \$2.4 billion (about \$292 million) came from New York City, and that this amount includes capital funding in addition to program support. We know this and many, many other details.

But we've missed the point. We've placed a burden of proof on the nonprofit cultural sector: justify your existence by showing us that art and creativity result in cash on the barrelhead. We've required these 723 organizations to reveal, in painstaking detail, their economic innards in ways that we don't ask of our Business Improvement Districts, our parks, our Industrial Retention Zones, or our corporate retention subsidy recipients.

And yet, existing community-based cultural networks are already doing the same or similar work:

- Providing technical assistance to member organizations and affiliated partners to improve operations and to access other supports;
- Developing special programs to enhance sustainability, reduce overhead costs, and centralize routine functions;
- Holding events to showcase local partners, attract new consumers, and build local identity;

- Facilitating networking between members and affiliates to create new synergies and expand opportunities for growth;
- Providing marketing support that is community branded while still being producer-specific;
- Engaging the wider community in planning, programming and development to strengthen a sense of place.

This work is happening within community-based cultural clusters all around the city now, but it's largely unseen and certainly under-supported. We must develop strategies as a city that allows us to recognize and support creative clusters. We must:

- Begin by acknowledging that they exist, and that they exist in a structured way that deserves official and sanctioned designation;
- Create room at the table for these community-based creative sector network leaders to be actively engaged in planning and implementing programs and strategies with their business peers and public partners;
- Reduce or eliminate bureaucratic snags and barriers using the tools and processes of parallel networks;
- Create access to public space for community cultural uses through innovative agreements and carefully crafted exceptions;
- Increase support generally to neighborhood based cultural organizations; and
- Seek equitable diversity of representation and engagement in these efforts from community based cultural partners of differing size, structure, and practice.

We already know enough to affirm that creative clusters have a deep and lasting impact in their communities. Indeed, in many cases they are already connected to or even embedded within networks of local small business leaders, community development partners, advocates and organizers. It's time we made it official, and it's time we made it stronger.

I thank you for your time and I look forward to any questions and comments you may have.

Michael Hickey
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Testimony – Tamara Greenfield, Executive Director, Fourth Arts Block, and Co-director, NOCD-NY

Oversight: New York City's Cultural Sector and Derivative Businesses, May 11, 2012

Chairs Reyna, Van Bramer, and members of the City Council - thank you for this opportunity to testify in support of Naturally Occurring Cultural Districts and our relationship to the local cultural economy.

I am Tamara Greenfield, Executive Director of Fourth Arts Block or FABnyc, a neighborhood wide coalition of 26 arts and community organizations in the East Village & Lower East Side. I am also co-director of the NOCD-NY working group and a public member of the Community Board 3 Arts & Culture Task Force.

As a neighborhood wide coalition, FABnyc works with our members to provide support services, facilitate resource sharing, and build deeper partnerships with the community. In particular, we work with local partners to raise the visibility of culture and small businesses through common placemaking tools like maps, websites, banners, public events and a visitors center.

In the process of pursuing these and other community improvement strategies, we have faced a wide array of confusing obstacles and regulations.

These obstacles are difficult for everyone, but hit smaller cultural groups and businesses the hardest. In general, there is a bias towards big arts institutions and business in our city's policy-making and actions, leaving smaller cultural groups and businesses to fend for themselves.

Here are some tangible recommendations to help ease these challenges:

1. Streamline guidelines to help community based efforts to improve street-level visibility
NOCDs are often hurt by lack of visibility to the general public. Several years ago, we led a participatory design process to increase signage, improve lighting and plant more trees. Even with funding from Councilmember Mendez, many of our proposed improvements have stalled. Agency rules governing streets and public spaces are often in conflict and require long, unclear approval processes.

2. Ease and clarify street activity permitting guidelines for community-based festivals
FABnyc organizes several festivals and street closures each year. These events offer free access to cultural programming for our community and bring new visitors and business to the neighborhood. Each year, it gets harder and harder to produce these festivals due to mounting rules from the Mayor's Street Activity Permit Office. Our tiny staff has to work harder to navigate restrictive rules designed for big commercial street fairs.

3. Encourage NYC & Co to promote neighborhood cultural vitality
FABnyc has paid \$675/year for an annual membership in NYC & Company. Unfortunately, most of the marketing is focused on large institutions or highly recognizable locations, which then

only benefits the businesses in those areas. By diversifying the kinds of promotion they do, we will also distribute the benefits of local, regional and international visitors. In San Francisco, street banners are provided free to arts and community groups to increase visibility of local culture. In NYC, it costs us \$2000+ each year for one banner.

4. Learn from New York City's other successes

- NBAT: FABnyc opened a Café and visitors center last year. The City's New Business Acceleration Team program helps small food businesses open quickly by unifying guidelines for several agencies. With their help, we opened in one month!
- Sustainability Programs: Last year, FABnyc was named the Go Green LES Model Block for sustainability. We have been helping small businesses and low income residential buildings get free energy assessments and incentives. Similar programs could be targeted to nonprofit cultural organizations to help them lower their costs and increase efficiency.
- Group Purchasing: The City's new group purchasing program is wonderful and available to nonprofits of every size.

We strongly encourage you to convene stakeholders in an interagency roundtable so we can support creative community building efforts together.

Thank you for your time.

Testimony – Caron Atlas, Co-director, NOCD-NY, Naturally Occurring Cultural District Working Group, and Director, Arts & Democracy Project Oversight: New York City’s Cultural Sector and Derivative Businesses, May 11, 2012

COVER SHEET

My name is Caron Atlas and I am Co-director of NOCD-NY, the Naturally Occurring Cultural District Working Group, a citywide alliance of community based arts and cultural networks and leaders that has joined together to revitalize NYC from the neighborhood up.

Our members, located in all five boroughs, reflect the diversity of the City and include a non-profit industrial developer, a cultural district composed of small arts organizations and businesses, community-based cultural hubs, artists, arts councils and museums.

My testimony will provide an overview from our coalition. I will describe Naturally Occurring Cultural Districts, why they matter, and offer our recommendations for the City.

- Naturally Occurring Cultural Districts (NOCDs) anchor neighborhood-based cultural economies that reach beyond the neighborhood to broader citywide and, at times, regional economies.
- Rather than operating from the top down, they are self-organized with local leadership and are an organic part of the community.
- They cross sectors, connecting arts and culture, small business and manufacturing, education, environment, and more
- The cultural ecologies of NOCDs interweave social, civic, and economic benefits within and across their communities. Often the economic benefits of NOCDs flow from their social and civic benefits.
- NOCDs stimulate economic development that has a double bottom line and a focus on an equitable and sustainable distribution of opportunities and benefits.
- Additionally they are hubs of creativity, and entrepreneurship and function as support systems for shared challenges.

Recommendations

We are highlighting recommendations that can be implemented in the short term to strengthen NOCDs and local cultural economies. The specifics of these broad categories are included in the bullet points under them on the attached written testimony. Our members will illustrate them when they speak.

1. Prioritize equitable distribution of opportunities and benefits related to cultural economies
2. Support cultural incubators and mission driven ownership
3. Reduce city bureaucracy and burdensome regulations
4. Provide access to public space
5. Use public resources to support neighborhood based culture

6. Include cultural leaders in decision-making

Some details on the last recommendation include:

- Convening stakeholders in an interagency roundtable to create a blueprint of support for neighborhood-based cultural clusters and networks.
- Establish knowledgeable cultural liaisons at City Councilmember offices with the role taken either by senior staff, a member of the local cultural community, or both.
- Support cultural committees on community boards.

We are happy to work with you on these recommendations.

Thank you for organizing this hearing and for the opportunity to testify.



The Naturally Occurring Cultural District Working Group (NOCD-NY) is a citywide alliance of community based arts networks and leaders that have joined together to revitalize NYC from the neighborhood up.

Naturally Occurring Cultural Districts (NOCDs) stimulate a combination of social, civic, and economic benefits within communities and across them. As anchors for neighborhood-based economies, they support community self-determination, equity, and local livelihoods. Their reach and impact also extends beyond their neighborhoods to broader citywide and regional economies.

Our communities and constituencies reflect the diversity of NYC and are often underserved by the conventional arts infrastructure. Our locally led, cross sector initiatives draw on community cultural assets to connect arts with small business and industry, re-imagine transportation hubs and plazas, and connect neighborhood vibrancy and sustainability.

Members range from a non-profit industrial developer to a cultural district made up of small arts organizations and businesses, from a community human rights institution to an arts museum. They include: Arts & Democracy Project; Bronx Council on the Arts; Fourth Arts Block; Greenpoint Manufacturing and Design Center; NY Chinatown History Project; El Museo del Barrio; The Point CDC; El Puente; Queens Museum of Art, Urban Bush Women, Council on the Arts and Humanities of Staten Island, and at large members Michael Hickey and Betsy Imershein.

Policy Recommendations

1. Prioritize Equitable Distribution of Opportunities and Benefits Related to Cultural Economies

- Formal recognition of NOCDs and cultural clusters to ensure access and participation in existing City programs (like BIDs, historic districts, industrial districts).
- Provide equitable funding for community-based organizations, not limited by budget size or cultural hierarchies.
- Develop funding criteria for excellence that recognizes diverse communities and cultures, with a broad definition of culture, and reflects the demographics of NYC.
- Prioritize equitable development that is shaped by local stakeholders and benefits diverse community members; avoid development that negatively impacts local cultural vitality.

2. Support Cultural Incubators and Mission Driven Ownership

- Establish incubator spaces for start-up creative industries; many of which are immigrant owned enterprises.
- Stabilize current manufacturing areas by maintaining and strengthening industrial zoning. Review use of special zoning districts (i.e. manufacturing, theater sub-district).
- Continue to provide funding for the development of affordable manufacturing space for businesses and creative industries displaced by legal and illegal conversions of traditional manufacturing stock.
- Support tax credit proposals for private landlords to rent to nonprofit cultural groups.
- Provide low-cost financing to mission driven landlords, including nonprofits and creative industry leadership to establish or stabilize flexible creative workspaces.

3. Reduce City Bureaucracy and Burdensome Regulations

- Ease and clarify Street Activity Permitting Office guidelines so they don't punish smaller community events in their efforts to eliminate big commercial festivals.
- Develop more programs like the NYC Business Express (NBAT), which helps small food businesses navigate the permitting process to open quickly.
- Streamline Dept of Transportation guidelines to help guide community based efforts to improve streetscapes, operate temporary or permanent kiosks, and manage public plazas.
- Provide management and financial support, possibly through a maintenance endowment to community organizations managing public plazas.
- Initiate creative solutions to minimize or eliminate physical/infrastructure barriers to community building and open space (i.e. BQE decking campaigns).
- Enforce multilingual access to Parks department procedures and revisit Parks Rules of Use to enable more diverse cultural expression (in particular, rules concerning music and food).
- Support and enforce the rights of creative street vendors and artists.

4. Provide Access to Public Spaces

- Review City-owned property for opportunities to use and share space creatively during non-primary use hours (i.e. libraries, recreation centers, schools, warehouse, piers, garages, empty pools, senior centers).
- Create more opportunities to establish ongoing workspaces in city-owned property through long-term leases, nonprofit partnerships, and RFPs.
- Maximize opportunities for temporary public art on public land by creating a unified public art program with clear guidelines & expectations, easy access points, and small grants.
- Facilitate community-based cultural projects in public spaces for other agencies, like DOT and Parks.

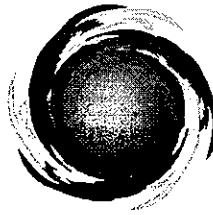
5. Use Public Resources to Support Neighborhood Based Culture

- Champion and promote neighborhood cultural vitality citywide using existing promotional tools, ranging from free street banner program to improved NYC & Co relations (i.e. reduction of fees for small culturals, borough specific campaigns, web promotion, visitor centers).
- Work with MTA to include more local cultural resources and creative districts on the neighborhood maps in the subway stations and promotional campaigns
- Launch a marketing campaign to promote the City's creative manufacturing sector, including all aspects of development and production (designer and fabricator) and art & culture that originates in NYC and moves across the globe (theater, music, publishing, art).
- Increase cultural funding to 1% of the city budget.
- Facilitate cross agency funding partnerships, like between SBS & DCA.
- Protect Summer Youth Employment funding.

6. Include Cultural Leaders in Decision-Making

- Convene an interagency stakeholders roundtable with a focused agenda and clear milestones, to create a blueprint for support for neighborhood-based cultural clusters and networks.
- Establish knowledgeable cultural liaisons at City Councilmember offices with the role taken either by senior councilmember staffer, a member of the local cultural community, or both.
- Support cultural committees on community boards.

NOCD-NY is supported by the Rockefeller Foundation's Cultural Innovation Fund and the New York Community Trust. For more information, visit www.nocdny.org. Email caronatlas@gmail.com or tamara@fabnyc.org.



EL PUENTE
GREEN LIGHT DISTRICT

Written Testimony Submitted to the **New York City Council Committee on Small Business and the Committee on Cultural Affairs, Libraries, and International Intergroup Relations**
Joint Oversight Hearing on *New York City's Cultural Sector and Derivative Businesses*
May 11, 2012

Submitted by Anusha Venkataraman
Green Light District Assistant Director at El Puente

I respectfully submit this testimony to Chairperson Reyna and Chairperson Van Bramer on the topic of *NYC's Cultural Sector and Derivative Businesses* on behalf of El Puente, an active member of the Naturally-Occurring Cultural District work group. El Puente is a thirty-old community human rights institution in North Brooklyn that promotes leadership for peace and justice through the engagement of youth and community members in the arts, education, scientific research, wellness and environmental action. I am the Assistant Director of the El Puente Green Light District, a ten-year initiative of the Williamsburg Southside ("Los Sures") community to exercise our right to self-determination, transforming Los Sures from one of the most economically and environmentally challenged neighborhoods in New York City into an equitable, sustainable, safe, healthy, and culturally engaged community. The Green Light District builds on El Puente's long history in the arts and leadership development to reach out and build a coalition of individuals and organizations committed to improving the Los Sures community from the ground up—in the image and vision of long-term residents committed to remaining in the community.

The community of Los Sures reflects a rich history of Latino arts and culture and today the Southside is home to a host of creative people, places and cultural organizations. El Puente is only one such organization, but the Green Light District is convening this network of cultural stakeholders—which include other nonprofits, informal networks of artists, and also institutions that are not always thought of as culturally-oriented but certainly are—such as churches, schools, and small businesses. For example, El Puente supports the Community Artists' Development and Resource Exchange (CADRE), a network of mostly Latino artists, artisans, and cultural workers. CADRE artists collectively advocate for equitable access to artistic and



cultural expression; create forums for creative exchange and collaboration; create live work and collective projects; and perform and exhibit work that honor and celebrate the cultural diversity and artistic richness of the Williamsburg and Bushwick communities.

This brings me to the policy recommendation I would like to impress upon you today: **prioritizing the equitable distribution of opportunities and benefits related to cultural economies.** CADRE artists are self-organizing and collectively supporting each other because they are drowning in the larger creative landscape of “hipster” and gentrifying Williamsburg. While many of those artists have lived and worked in the community for decades, their art forms and crafts are not as visible, recognized, and, at times, as well funded as the other art forms and modes of cultural expression that Williamsburg is now known around the world for. Criteria for excellence—as defined by city policies and funding sources—must recognize the wide diversity of artistic and cultural practices that must be supported, some of which are very informal and craft- or artisan-based. Venues supporting this diversity of cultural practices must also be supported and funded.

Second, artists, cultural workers, and neighborhood-based cultural organizations must be brought to the table early and meaningfully—and heard—on policy issues that stand to impact them, such as planning and development. Many artists we work with can no longer afford to live and/or work in the community they are dedicated to because of the Greenpoint-Williamsburg Waterfront Rezoning that has driven development in North Brooklyn—and displaced not only people, but the cultures, cultural practices, and businesses that they support, drive, and uphold. Uprooting people equals the disruption of culture and community, and reduces the ability of the small businesses of that community to survive and thrive. In terms of the drive for economic development, not all businesses are creative equal—some serve to support artists and local culture, while other forms of economic activity harm them.

The formal recognition of NOCDs and cultural hubs is integral to ensuring that NYC’s strong cultural communities are not further disrupted. For example, the El Puente Green Light District is a place-based initiative that is undergirded by a cluster of small and large institutions, some formal and some more informal, which are all stakeholders in the community. We must think about the idea of cultural institutions more broadly so that it includes these neighborhood-based networks, hubs, and clusters. Collectively within and among our communities, we have much to offer in the way of equitable, sustainable models for community development with artists and small businesses—and artists as small businesses—at their core.

Testimony: New York City Council joint hearing before Committee on Cultural Affairs, Libraries & International Intergroup Relations and Committee on Small Business discussing New York City's Cultural Sector and Derivative Businesses.

Betsy Imershein: Consultant and artist engaging communities, small businesses and cultural organizations in economic development, cultural revitalization and sustainability initiatives. May 11, 2012

Chairmember Van Bramer, Chairmember Reyna, and members of the City Council. Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of naturally occurring cultural districts and their crucial importance within and across the communities of our City.

Good morning. I am Betsy Imershein, a member at large of NOCD-NY; a consultant working in the neighborhoods of NYC, involved in community, economic and cultural development. Additionally, I am an artist: having worked in and been a producer of non-profit theatre in NYC for many years and a photographer, with 10 published children's books.

I tell you all of this to explain the breadth of my experiences related to the issues that brought us here today and to highlight the importance of areas that support the creative economy and naturally occurring cultural districts.

A few short stories:

Working with Fourth Arts Block (FABnyc) for several years, one of only two formally designated cultural districts in NYC and a member of NOCD-NY, I have repeatedly heard from City agencies that they don't know what to do with us ... why don't we become a BID? There are potentially several answers to that question, but the simplest is that we can't, two thirds of the property owners in the district are non-profit entities.

Launching and directing the Maspeth Industrial Business Zone in 2006, one of my chief responsibilities was advocating for the over 550 industrial and manufacturing companies in my zone. That advocacy took many forms, and during my tenure, one of the ongoing issues I had to deal with was the illegal conversions of manufacturing space for artist use, both residential and workspace. Another component of that advocacy was a recognition of the breath of creative industries existing and expanding in the zone.

Working on a project in Long Island City a few years ago, an executive director of one of the large arts organizations in the area told me that their work was intertwined with over 80 businesses in the surrounding community. Isn't that amazing? Over 80 commercial and industrial businesses! And she didn't know how they could produce their work and function without them ... all this being said through a prism of her concern that the industrial businesses were being pushed out ... because of development, higher land values and therefore, rents that are increasingly unaffordable.

Moving forward:

Strengthen NOCD activity and neighborhood-based economies by incorporating formal recognition with equitable funding. What can be learned from BIDS, merchant associations, historic districts to successfully implement this?

Stabilize current manufacturing areas and continue to provide funding for ongoing development of affordable manufacturing space for businesses and creative industries. Create and convene interagency stakeholders with a focused agenda and a clear blueprint to support the needs of manufacturing businesses and artists, so that they no longer compete for the limited affordable spaces and resources in their neighborhoods. Support neighborhood-based cultural clusters and networks.

Thank you.

**Queens Museum of Art Testimony to the Joint Hearing of the
New York City Council Committees on Small Business and Cultural Affairs
May 11, 2012**

Good morning. My name is David Strauss and I am the Director of External Affairs at the Queens Museum of Art. I would like to begin by thanking Councilmembers Reyna and Van Bramer for chairing this important hearing examining the intersection of culture and small business, and furthermore, to thank the entire City Council for its steadfast support of culture throughout these past difficult budget cycles.

I know that my colleagues in the cultural sector have provided ample data and anecdotal testimony on the importance of cultural in the small business sector, so I will concentrate on three items that exemplify this nexus in the course Queens Museum's everyday operations.

First, a little background - the Queens Museum is a mid-sized museum with a budget of just over \$3.4 million per year, employing 33 full-time staff and an additional 24 part-time educators and teaching artists. We are a member of the City's Cultural Institution's Group, meaning that we are on City-owned property, and receive a portion of our operating funding and energy support from the City. Our exhibitions and programs serve more than 200,000 people each year, primarily residents of Queens, but we also welcome tens of thousands of people from throughout the city, country and world.

The most common way to measure the impact of culture on small business is the direct and trickle down spending that we generate. By this I mean the Queens Museum events that are catered by local eateries like Torilleria Nixtamal in Corona, Delhi Palace in Jackson Heights, and Spicy and Tasty in Flushing, the exhibition supplies purchased from Mensch Mills Lumber or Beplat Hardware, and the myriad other businesses we interact with during the course of the day.

Add to that the fact that thousands of visitors are coming from outside of the immediate area to visit the museum, and then heading out into the local neighborhoods to experience the finest food and wares that the worlds existing within Queens have to offer. Using the museum as an entry point, these visitors bring their sense of adventure and spending power into the surrounding communities. Without the Queens Museum, and the four other cultural institutions in Flushing Meadows Corona Park, many of the local businesses would be seeing a lot less action. And this model can be shifted to reflect businesses large and small that enjoy the trickle down effects of cultural groups large and small throughout the five boroughs. On a citywide level, the record number of tourists that the city is attracting with each successive year has kept the city afloat financially with hotels full, restaurants packed, and empty taxis hard to come by. There

is no doubt that the museums, experimental theatres, small and large dance companies, zoos and other cultural outlets that we offer are driving visitors here in droves.

Speaking of tourism, in 2003, with City and foundation funding, the Queens Museum set out to develop a local cultural tourism initiative. Working with community businesses, leaders and cultural institutions, we established the Queens Culture Trolley, a weekend service that aimed to remove some of the intimidating mystery of Queens that prevented people from fully enjoying the borough offered. We hired the first of our two community organizers to pound the pavement, meet and create open dialogues with local businesses and to find ways to drive trolley passengers to their businesses – a free empanada at this restaurant, a free pastry at another – but to make a long story short, as an art museum, we were not very adept at running a small transportation system and after a few years, the Queens Culture Trolley was ended. However, the community and business relationships we made during the failed project have grown into a coalition of more than 100 entities looking to better the lives of those living and working in and around Corona Plaza. Responding to the needs of the community, we shifted our focus to making the once grand plaza at 102nd street and Roosevelt Avenue into the focal point of the community once again.

As this project grew, my colleague Jose Serrano, the second of our two Community Organizers, spearheaded efforts to better understand the needs of small businesses and local community groups, with the hopes that we could use our in-house talents and connections to help exact some positive change. After hours of discussions with business owners, Jose and his team of volunteers were able to ascertain what these people felt were issues hindering their individual success and the overall success of the plaza as a public space. From there we organized beautification efforts, held arts and health street fairs, presented public art projects and performances, created a free bilingual heart healthy cookbook in partnership with Elmhurst Hospital, and for the past three years, we have been leading the charge with the Queens Economic Development Corporation and Councilmember Ferreras to enroll Corona Plaza in the DOT’s Plaza Program, which would result in a much-needed capital investment in the plaza, thereby bringing people both from within and outside the local community to Corona Plaza for performances, artmaking workshops, and some relaxation in the midst of the pressures of their 7-day work week. Of course this would benefit the 28 small businesses immediately surrounding the plaza, and the hundreds on the neighboring streets and Jose is working closely to include them in the process at every step of the way.

The third example of the intersection of art and small business ties conveniently into a free event we are hosting tomorrow. In recent years we have noticed an increasing amount of energy coming from Ridgewood, the “Old Queens” neighborhood that has had new life breathed into it by artists and creative producers who have been priced out of Williamsburg and Bushwick, and have now crossed the

Brooklyn/Queens border. The art crawl event tomorrow, called “Actually, it’s Ridgewood” is a tongue in cheek reference to those who for one reason or another refuse to admit that this new enclave is in Ridgewood, Queens and not Bushwick, Brooklyn. Borough pride aside, the event, which starts at the historic Onderdonk House, will introduce more than 100 participants to nine of the galleries, studios and art spaces – all small businesses - that have already put Ridgewood, Queens on the hipster radar, and as we know from previous experience, will lead to widespread attention. New restaurants, boutiques and grocery stores have sprung up in Ridgewood and waves of new residents are ushering in a new era in the neighborhood’s history. Well-established businesses are enjoying this new uptick as well and if ever there was an example of how the creative class can help revive a community, this is it. If you want to experience this firsthand, please feel free to join us at 3 pm tomorrow.

In closing, I would just encourage the Chairs and members of both committees, and your colleagues throughout the Council to continue doing what you’re doing. Keep fighting for more cultural funding so all three of the scenarios I described can continue to evolve and grow, and so that the cultural lifeblood of New York City will continue to flow out of the galleries, studios, and theatres, and into the local businesses that enjoy our crowds as much as we do.

I thank you for your time.

QUEENS SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

Providing world-class music & arts education to the international community of Queens.



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Goals

With QSO's new programming initiatives and collaborations, we have strategically planned to **increase the Board size and garner new small business and corporation funders** to support our 501(c)(3) non-profit professional arts organization, giving us the opportunity to:

- Continue offering our free programs to the borough.
- Sponsor the new festival concert format that is free to the community.
- Commission new works that speak to our ethnically diverse borough.
- Expand our In-School Residencies to reach at least one school in each Queens district.

Programs

QSO offers the following programs, all FREE to the community:

- **New in FY12!** The 1st Annual QSO Arts & Music Festival – in partnership with Jamaica Performing Arts Center, Flushing Town Hall and Kupferberg Center, Queens College
- Young Soloist Competition – in partnership with Aaron Copland School of Music, Queens College and Taiwan Center
- Symphony 101 Series – in partnership with Queens Library
- Young People's Concerts – in partnership with Kupferberg Center, Queens College
- In-School Residencies – in partnership with City Council Members
- In-School Concerts & Workshops
- Concerts on the Green: free summer parks series – in partnership with St. John's University and Forest Park
- Music on the Move! Chamber Series

QSO has transitioned from the old concert subscription model to a free festival in FY12.

FY12 Transition

This year marked a strategic shift for our non-profit arts organization. Starting FY12, all concerts that QSO presents are FREE! We eliminated the Masterworks Concert Series and replaced it with a two-week music festival from April 14-29, 2012 entitled *1001 Voices – Discover the Immigrant Experience in Queens*.

This was the first official QSO Arts & Music Festival, which included 72 other Queens cultural organizations' events happening throughout the borough within the two designated weeks in April 2012. We intend to continue and expand this festival every year as we garner new arts groups in participation and funding sources throughout the years. ***We believe this festival will be a catalyst to bring focus to the arts in Queens and recognize Queens Symphony Orchestra's contribution to the borough's landscape.***

QSO had three orchestral concerts each weekend at three different venues, with the final performance featuring the world premiere of our newly commissioned work by Frank London and Judith Sloan entitled *1001 Voices: A Symphony for Queens*. This multidisciplinary work tells the story of the unique immigrant experience of Queens residents from arrival to present time through a three-movement symphony written for orchestra, ethnic instruments, singers, 5 different spoken language actors, multi-media projections and a 190-voice choir.

Background

QSO's vision and mission statements reflect the organization's priority of service to the culturally diverse members of the Queens community. Currently in our 59th season, QSO is the *only* professional orchestra and the oldest and largest arts organization of the borough; comprised of union musicians who also perform on Broadway, with the New York City Ballet and other freelance orchestras. QSO presents 10 to 20 performances throughout the year, serving 30,000 residents, including 8,000 youth.

QSO moved our administrative office onto the Queens College campus in April 2011, giving us many more opportunities to collaborate within the campus and beyond. We are working with Kupferberg Center, Copland School of Music and the Armstrong House Museum.

Rasu Jilani
Arts and Culture Project Manager
Pratt Center for Community Development

Pratt Center's Art, Culture and Sustainability Project

In the spring of 2011, Pratt Center for Community Development launched a two-year program designed to connect the arts and artists with our multi-layered work, helping New York City communities to become more environmentally sustainable. Supported by a grant from the Rockefeller Foundation's Cultural Innovation Fund, the Center has partnered with academic and community organizations to produce innovative culture, arts, media and organizing strategies that seek to engage neighborhood residents and artists to promote sustainable, environmental action. This project is a part of Pratt Center's broader goal to develop replicable models that will aid urban communities' efforts to become environmentally sustainable -- intensive work we are doing in partnership with nine different community organizations in all five boroughs of NYC. The groups Pratt Center has been working with are Bedford Stuyvesant Restoration Corporation (BSRC), the Cypress Hills Local Development Corporation (CHLDC) and Arts East New York (AENY.)

Pratt Center's arts, culture and sustainability initiative was designed to enhance ongoing efforts with these organizations. The infusion of arts and culture is used to further engage and educate community residents by reinforcing and normalizing sustainable values and behaviors. Working together, CHLDC, BSRC and Pratt Center hope to spark a high level of community dialogue that gains momentum and excitement around sustainability concepts, as well as resident involvement in the efforts needed to generate sustainable communities.

Cypress Hills Local Development Corporation's programs:

- The Energy Block Party 2011 was a free, public event that provided an opportunity for Cypress Hills and East New York community members to learn useful information about reducing their energy use and lowering energy bills.
- Pratt Center assisted CHLDC and Arts East NY by providing art-based and sustainability-based resources to enhance the event's goal of an equitable, sustainable, and culturally vital community.
- A children's art and education corner and community mural, planned in partnership with Arts East New York, explored sustainability

issues in the community through art.

- The Verde Summit was a community-wide event sponsored and planned by CHLDC, and attracting local residents from Cypress Hills and East New York, included: workshops to discuss topics that reflect the results from the Community Satisfaction Survey, to prioritize and devise solutions for community concerns, as well as gather feedback on and identify strategic Brownfields Opportunity Areas (BOA) sites.
- The 2011 Cypress Hills Verde Summit attracted hundreds of local residents, through which community members utilized reused everyday materials – such as bottle caps and old Legos – to visually depict their ideal community. The Summit also included a community arts workshop, planned in partnership with Arts East New York, which included kids' arts activities facilitated by local artists. Each activity explored various aspects of what makes a neighborhood environmentally and culturally sustainable.

Arts East New York's programs:

- Arts East New York hosted Summer Saturdaze, a series of cultural events for East New York residents who have limited access to local arts resources. The events took place at the East New York Farms farmers market, and were designed to explore socio-economic issues through artistic interpretation as well as amplify local sustainability concerns in the community. Arts East New York produced eight events in partnership with Pratt Center and with additional support from the Brooklyn Arts Council and Citizens Committee for New York City. Pratt Center worked with Arts East New York to incorporate sustainability components into each event.
- AENY's innovative approach to community beautification and improvement include permanent and semi-permanent artistic and symbolic exhibitions. Current projects include an African burial ground dedication for remains located beneath the New Lots Library. "Mural Mile" is a project to create murals on the walls of businesses located under the elevated train to beautify the mixed residential and business area as well as improve street safety by adding lighting. Project partners include local businesses, the Department of Transportation and the Metropolitan Transit Author

Bedford-Stuyvesant Restoration Corporation programs:

- **Restoration Rocks** is an annual Bed-Stuy Alive! Festival, a week-

long neighborhood celebration, which promotes and inspires community sustainability through the theme of "Bed-Stuy Alive! Live Healthy, Live Well, Live Green." Restoration Rocks was the kick-off event of Bed-Stuy Alive! Restoration Rocks features live cultural performances from local schools and community organizations as well as a free day-long music concert of some of the most dynamic emerging and established artists performing on the Brooklyn stage, highlighting the rich culture and vibrancy of the Bed-Stuy community.

- Local small businesses and sustainability-related community organizations hosts information booths at the event focuses on community sustainability and supporting local businesses in Bedford-Stuyvesant.
- "*Amplify Action: Sustainability through the Arts*" was presented in Spring 2012 by the Skylight Gallery, a part of BSRC's Center for Arts and Culture. The exhibition is conceived to demonstrate how arts, culture and media are powerful catalysts for social change and aims to engage neighborhoods in a dialogue about sustainable living, making healthy consumer choices, and taking environmental action. <http://www.amplifyaction.org>

FOR THE RECORD

TESTIMONY

to

**The New York City Council
Committee on Cultural Affairs,
Libraries & International Intergroup Relations
And
Committee on Small Businesses**

By

Taylor Gramps

**Alliance of Resident Theatres/New York
(A.R.T./New York)**

May 10, 2012

Good morning, I'm Taylor Gramps and I represent the Alliance of Resident Theatres/New York (A.R.T./New York), the service and advocacy organization for New York City's 325 non-profit theatres. I would like to take this opportunity to thank Jimmy Van Bramer, Chair of Cultural Affairs, Libraries, and International Intergroup Relations, and Diana Reyna, Chair of the Committee on Small Businesses, for holding a hearing on an issue of vital importance to our membership.

In the Spring of 2011, A.R.T./New York conservatively estimated the economic impact of our membership on local restaurants and parking garages. Based on the assumptions that each pair of two attendees will spend \$50 on dinner and 25% of the audience will pay \$25 for parking, we determined in an average year, our membership generates approximately \$188 million (annually?). A.R.T./New York represents 85% of New York City's non-profit theatres, however, only four of our member theaters are 4 Broadway theatres. If 85% of the City's non-profit theaters, the vast majority of which are off Broadway, generate approximately \$188 million, solely at restaurants and parking garages, imagine what the impact as a whole would be.

Partnerships are the lifeblood of the theatre community. In order to cut costs, theatres partner to co-produce their shows in New York City and nationwide. The scenic designer and technical director frequent the local hardware stores. The costume shop is working with the Laundromats, dry cleaners, and shopping in the thrift stores. Actors in rehearsal are taking their coffee breaks in the coffee shop down the street, and eating lunches in the neighboring restaurants. In order to create a successful production, the theatre engages with and exists as a part of a wider community, while significantly contributing to the economy of New York City. Mary Jo Waits and Erin Sparks of the NGA Center for Best Practices put it best in their recent study *New Engines of Growth: Five Roles for Arts, Culture, and Design*: "The creative economy does not consist only of artists."

A.R.T./New York knows as well as anyone how meaningful these partnerships are, and each year we take an evening to celebrate the partnerships between non-profit theatres and small businesses. The DeWitt Stern Local Hero Awards are given annually to small businesses that truly make our member theater's work possible. In the last few years, we have recognized a dry cleaner that will clean your suit for free before a job interview, restaurants that provide artists with food during rehearsal breaks at no cost, graphic designers offering their considerable talents at a discount, and an accountant that teaches workshops on tax codes and the Form 990 to artists at no charge. Two years ago, The Chocolate Factory

honored every participant in their celebrated and highly anticipated Taste of L.I.C event. According to Executive Director Sheila Lewandowski, each organization proudly displays their award in their establishment.

Our Executive Director, Ginny Louloudes, often recounts an anecdote from her time as a Marketing Director for a non-profit theatre. One night, she was leaving the theatre after working late. As she walked toward the subway, a local restaurateur who often partnered with the theatre rushed out of his establishment and asked what was going on. Ginny, confused, asked what he meant. The owner responded that his business had been incredibly slow that week, and he was worried. He wanted to know where all of the theatre's patrons that he could always count on were. Ginny explained that they had just closed a show, but that another would open in a week or so. Relieved, the owner thanked her. He was reliant on the theatre patrons to make a night out of their theatre-going, much like the theatres are reliant on the businesses within the communities to buoy them, particularly in these difficult economic times. These partnerships are vital to our small businesses, whether the businesses are restaurants and hardware stores or non-profit theatres, and they are vital to the economic engine of this great City.

Thank you very much for your time.

**TESTIMONY BEFORE
THE NEW YORK CITY COUNCIL,
Committee on Small Business and the Committee on Cultural Affairs,
Libraries and International Intergroup Relations**

“New York City’s Cultural Sector and Derivative Small Businesses”

COUNCIL ON THE ARTS & HUMANITIES FOR STATEN ISLAND

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May 11, 2012

Good morning. I am Melanie Franklin Cohn, Executive Director of the Council on the Arts and Humanities for Staten Island and a member of the Naturally Occurring Cultural District Working Group (NOCD-NY). I appreciate the City Council’s interest in the arts and how they empower and enrich our local neighborhoods. I would like to thank Councilmember Diana Reyna and Councilmember Jimmy Van Bramer for inviting us here today.

Staten Island has been growing rapidly, by about 24% since 1990. The population growth has led to an influx of new faces who are creating a diverse cultural scene. Although these artists and heritage bearers (individuals that preserve, recreate, and transmit their cultural heritage to the next generation) come from diverse backgrounds—such as new immigrants from Mexico, Sri Lanka, Liberia, and transplants from across the U.S.—they have a common goal, to share their art forms and cultural expressions with their community. Unfortunately, Staten Island’s cultural infrastructure has not kept pace with its growth. There are few places to present their work.

One solution to that problem is bringing these artists and heritage bearers into public, city-owned spaces. This not only allows artists a space to present their work, but brings liveliness to public areas and can offer great accessibility to events so that even casual passersby become audiences.

We’ve had great success in this--from LUMEN, a one-night video and performance art festival that attracts over 2,000 people, which was held last year at the city-owned Former Third District Lighthouse Depot, to St. George Day, a community-organized festival that included a Dragon Parade, which was held last month at Tompkinsville Park.



When community artists create an extraordinary art experience, such as LUMEN or St. George Day, it attracts large numbers of people who patronize local coffee shops, bars, and restaurants and contributes to an idea of a “cool” neighborhood where other kinds of shops & small businesses begin to thrive. **These successes are why providing access to public spaces is so important.**

But for small art groups, individual artists, and heritage bearers (particularly artists who don’t speak English as their first language) the permissions, contracting, and permitting necessary to access these public, city-owned spaces can be formidable. Simply finding out what city agency needs to be contacted for permission and what paperwork is necessary can be very difficult for those who have never gone through the process before. These complexities can make the use of many public spaces out of reach for artists and immigrant groups. **This is why I support city efforts that help streamline and guide artists and heritage bearers through the process and provide financial support.**

A great example of how this can be accomplished on the city-level is the Department of Transportation’s Urban Art Program. This program allows artists a streamlined way to work with DOT to use public plazas, sidewalks and other DOT spaces as “canvases for temporary art in all five boroughs.” The DOT’s pARTners program even offers up to \$5000 for the installation and creation of the work. And they assist with press releases to announce the project.

We have worked with DOT on a temporary public art installation at the Ferry Terminal with artist Victoria Munro. This is a project that would have been impossible 10 years ago because at that time there would have been no system in place for beginning a conversation with the agency. But with the dedicated program at DOT, the art installation became a reality, and it enriched the local community. I encourage the City Council to consider the success of the DOT program as a model for ways to make other City-Owned property accessible to the community for arts programming.

Creating streamlined ways that artists and heritage bearers can bring these extraordinary art experiences to life in public space is vital to the synergy that exists between community artists and community businesses. This is why I am here today encouraging the City Council to help find ways to facilitate community-based cultural projects in public spaces **by reviewing city-owned properties for opportunities to use and share space creatively during non-primary use hours; to maximize opportunities for temporary public art through a unified program; and to facilitate community-based cultural projects with other city agencies in the way DOT’s program does so well.**

Brooklyn Navy Yard

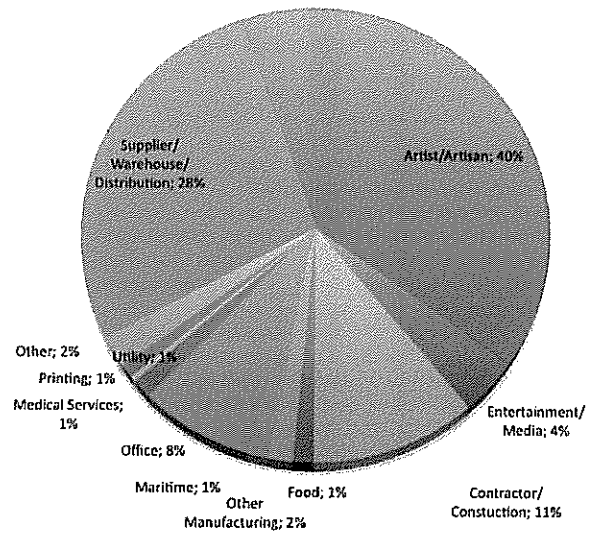
Presentation to Committee on Small Business
Committee on Cultural Affairs, Libraries and International Intergroup Relations
May 11, 2012

Background

Over the last decade, the Brooklyn Navy Yard has become one of the key hubs for the intersection of arts, culture and the economy in New York City. Of our 275 tenants, Artist/Artisans and Entertainment/Media sectors represent nearly 50% of all businesses within the Yard. These tenants occupy approximately 15% of the space, and employ over 2,000 of the Yard's 6,000 workers (*See attached examples*). Included in this is Steiner Studios, New York City's first major addition of motion picture studio-space in two decades. The \$128-million complex boasts the largest sound stages on the East Coast and employs over 1,000 people; an expansion of 295,000SF and investment of \$55 million is underway.

The Brooklyn Navy Yard Development Corporation (BNYDC), is a private non-profit that manages the Yard on a long-term lease with the City of New York. BNYDC has targeted industrial sectors with viable long-term futures in the City including commercial artists, artisans, and woodworkers serving cultural institutions and housing markets; entertainment, film and media anchored by Steiner Studios. Also targeted for growth are e-commerce fulfillment; high-end designers combined with on-site manufacturing; maritime ship repair; and warehouse distribution. Our success has led to a 99% occupancy rate over the last decade. Based upon this track record, the Yard is in the midst of its largest expansion since WWII, adding approximately two million square feet of space and 2,000 jobs over the next two years.

Brooklyn Navy Yard Tenant Sectors

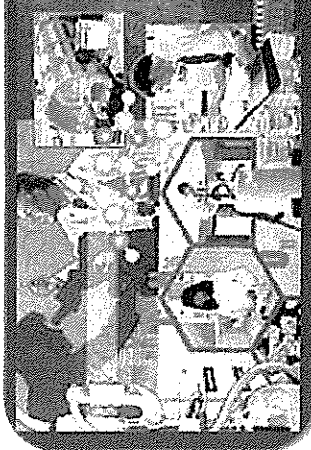


Small, creative-class driven, artisans represent a significant portion of green manufacturers in the Yard. To further encourage green manufacturing and be a good neighbor to the surrounding communities, BNYDC has made a major commitment to cutting-edge green infrastructure investments and green building development including the nation's first LEED Gold Certified multi-story multi-tenanted industrial building, which is fully occupied by artists and artisans.

Brooklyn Navy Yard Center at Building 92: Promoting Arts and the Economy

The Yard's revitalization has provided an opportunity to promote the role of arts and the economy, to reflect on this unique place over time and to share the Yard's rich and continuing history with the public. In fall 2011, BNYDC opened the Brooklyn Navy Yard Center at Building 92, a highly visible exhibition, visitors and employment center that has helped showcase our existing tenant base and cultivate potential tenants. Within the exhibit, a "Today's Yard" gallery highlights the diverse tenant base and the products and creativity within the Yard. To date, BLDG 92 has welcomed over 11,000 visitors to its exhibit, programs and public tours, which were voted "Best Tour 2012" by New York Magazine. The Brooklyn Navy Yard, through BLDG 92 and its thriving tenant base, underscores the importance of arts and culture as a viable and thriving sector in the Yard and in New York City.

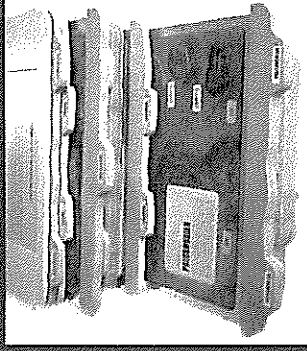
Recent Tenant Projects



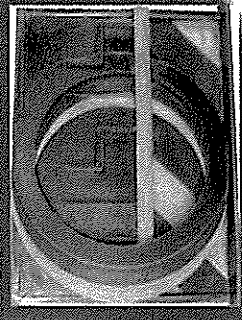
Mason Nye
*Project: Mural at
 Bristol-Myers Squibb
 Headquarters; Mural
 in Bloomingdale's
 Men's Dept, NY*



DCM Fabrication
*Projects: Window
 Displays, Polo Ralph
 Lauren, Travelling
 exhibit, American
 Museum of Natural
 History.*

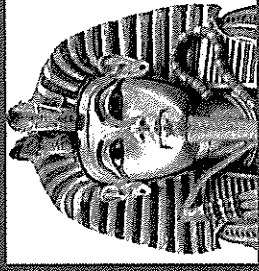


Michelle Greene-
*Sculptor. Projects:
 MTA*



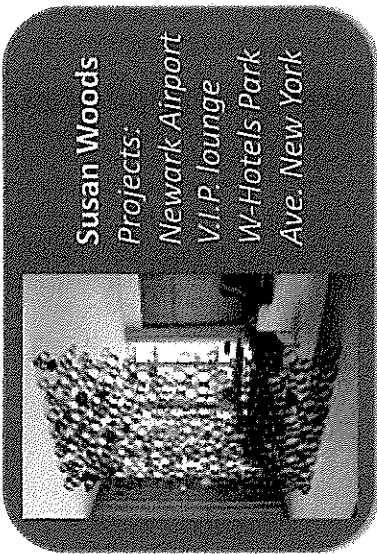
Surround Art

Treats and restores fine art. Clients include: American Museum of Natural History, Museum of Modern Art



Stiegelbauer Associates

Projects: Guiding Light, Saturday Night Live, Metro Sports Desk



Susan Woods
*Projects:
 Newark Airport
 V.I.P. lounge
 W-Hotels Park
 Ave. New York*

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: 5/10/12

(PLEASE PRINT)
Name: Kellie Terry

Address: 940 Garrison Ave

I represent: NOCD / THE POINT CDC

Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: 5/11/12

(PLEASE PRINT)
Name: Lynda Herndon, Executive Director

Address: Queens Symphony Orchestra 65-30 Kissena Blvd,
Flushing, NY 11367

I represent: _____

Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: 5/11/2012

(PLEASE PRINT)
Name: David Strauss

Address: _____

I represent: Queens Museum - F. Art

Address: _____

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: 5/11/2012

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Rasa Jilani

Address: _____

I represent: Pratt Center for Community Development

Address: Pratt Institute Brooklyn, NY

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

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in favor in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Cassandra Smith

Address: 1155 Manhattan Ave Brooklyn 11222

I represent: Greenpoint Manufacturing + Design Center

Address: Same

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

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in favor in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Melanie Franklin Cohn

Address: 393 17th St, 2A, Bklyn, NY 11215

I represent: Council on the Arts & Humanities for S.I.

Address: 1000 Richmond Terrace, SI, NY 10301

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**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

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in favor in opposition

Date: 5-11-12

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Verdery Roosevelt

Address: 110 W 90 St 2E, NY 10024

I represent: Upper Manhattan Empowerment Zone

Address: 55 W 125 St NY 10027

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: 5/11/12

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Betsy Ivershein

Address: 1 Ward St, Hastings on Hudson, NY

I represent: NOC D - NY

Address: (same)

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Ryan Gilliam

Address: Brook East Street 202, Albemarle Rd Bklyn 11218

I represent: Downtown Art / NOCD - NY

Address: 61 E. 4 St. NYC 10003

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**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

[]

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: 5/11/12

Name: Tamara Greenfield, Fourth Arts Block
(PLEASE PRINT)

Address: 61 E 4 St, NYC NY 10003

I represent: Fourth Arts Block / NOCD-NY

Address: Same

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

[]

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: May 11,

Name: Caron Atlas
(PLEASE PRINT)

Address: 88 Prospect Park West 3D Brooklyn

I represent: NOCD - NY + Arts + Democracy 11215

Address: Same as above

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

[]

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: _____

Name: Michael Hickey
(PLEASE PRINT)

Address: 202 Albanvale Rd # 2 Brooklyn NY

I represent: Naturally Occurring Cultural Districts 11218

Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: 05/11/12

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: MICHELLE PROFFIT
Address: #155 WATER ST. #413/318 GREENWOOD
I represent: ARTHOME
Address: 155 WATER ST. #413 11201

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Anusha Venkataraman
Address: 944 Athletic Ave #3 Bk 11238
I represent: El Rente
Address: 211 S. 4th St. Bk 11211

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: 5/11/12

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Richard Drucker
Address: 63 Flushing Ave Bklyn
I represent: Brooklyn Navy Yard
Address: _____

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: MONICA BLUM

Address: 1841 Broadway Suite 1112

I represent: LINCOLN SQUARE BUSINESS INC. DIT

Address: same

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Maria Bauman

Address: 138 South Oxford

I represent: NOCI

Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Fabrizio Amadori

Address: 115 William St

I represent: IBS

Address: 115 William St

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

[]

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Eric Johnson (EDC)

Address: Vice President

I represent: _____

Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

[]

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: KEVIN CUNNINGHAM

Address: 30 Greenway

I represent: Lower Manhattan Arts League

Address: Lower Manhattan

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

[]

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: 5/11/12

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: SHEILA LEWANDOWSKI

Address: 5-3949th Ave LIC

I represent: The Queada Family

Address: 5-4949th Ave LIC

◆ Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms ◆

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: 5/11/12

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: KATE CRVIN

Address: 31 CHAMBER S

I represent: CULTURAL AFFAIRS

Address: _____

◆ Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms ◆

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Deon...

Address: _____

I represent: ...

Address: _____

◆ Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms ◆